

is the high point. Most important, however, is that these numbers will decline after this short-term rise. Note that the INS projections in Figure 1 did not take into account the impact of the income and sponsorship requirements passed under the 1996 immigration bill. Those new requirements are expected to have at least some effect in reducing legal immigration, particularly among spouses and children, that is not reflected in the INS projections.

IN HISTORICAL TERMS, LEGAL IMMIGRATION REMAINS MODERATE

As a percentage of the U.S. population—the most accurate measurement of the impact of immigration—legal immigration is moderate by historical standards. The annual rate of legal immigration in 1996 equaled just 0.3 percent of the U.S. population—less than one-third the rate near the turn of the century and lower than every year in the nation's history between 1840 and 1930. Even in absolute terms, the 1996 total is less than the annual totals near the turn of the century when America was smaller and less economically developed, and therefore less capable of absorbing new people than it is today. Numerically, legal immigration in 1996 was below the level recorded in 10 other occasions since 1904.

CONCLUSION

Our legal immigration system is based on America's historical commitment to immigration and to the principle that it is sound public policy to unite close family members, help employers sponsor needed employees, and provide humanitarian relief for those fleeing religious or political persecution. While numbers are a part of the system, it is important that we understand what the numbers mean and approach them with a minimum of rhetoric, but rather with a premium on intelligent debate.

Ben Wattenberg of the American Enterprise Institute describes the current level of immigration using this illustration: Imagine you are in a giant ballroom where 1,000 people are gathered for a Washington cocktail party. Champagne is being poured, waiters are carrying trays of hors d'oeuvres, and into the room walk three more people. Those three people represent the proportion of the U.S. population that immigrants add each year. There is little evidence these immigrants are spoiling the party.

FOOTNOTES

¹ INA Sections 201 and 203.

² INA Section 202(a)(1) states that the "total number of immigrant visas made available to natives of any single foreign state . . . may not exceed 7 percent" in a fiscal year. Under the law, 75 percent of the visas for the spouses and children of lawful permanent residents are not subject to the 7 percent ceiling.

³ Statement of Susan Martin, Executive Director, U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, U.S. House of Representatives, May 16, 1996.

⁴ Opening Statement, Chairman Lamar Smith, "Projected Increases in Legal Immigration," Hearing Before the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, May 16, 1996, p. 3.

⁵ Immigrant Visa Control and Reporting Division, U.S. Department of State, "Various Determinations of Numerical Limits of Immigrants Required Under the Terms of The Immigration and Nationality Act as Amended by the Immigration Act of 1990," for FY 1996 and FY 1997. Under the law, a minimum of 226,000 family preference visas are available each year.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, April 22, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,340,281,332,685.87. (Five trillion, three hundred forty billion, two hundred

eighty-one million, three hundred thirty-two thousand, six hundred eighty-five dollars and eighty-seven cents)

One year ago, April 22, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,101,586,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred one billion, five hundred eighty-six million)

Five years ago, April 22, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,889,360,000,000. (Three trillion, eight hundred eighty-nine billion, three hundred sixty million)

Ten years ago, April 22, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,271,567,000,000. (Two trillion, two hundred seventy-one billion, five hundred sixty-seven million)

Fifteen years ago, April 22, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,058,288,000,000 (One trillion, fifty-eight billion, two hundred eighty-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,281,993,332,685.87 (Four trillion, two hundred eighty-one billion, nine hundred ninety-three million, three hundred thirty-two thousand, six hundred eighty-five dollars and eighty-seven cents) during the past 15 years.

U.S. FOREIGN OIL CONSUMPTION FOR WEEK ENDING APRIL 18

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending April 18, the U.S. imported 7,984,000 barrels of oil each day, 684,000 barrels more than the 7,300,000 imported during the same week a year ago.

Americans relied on foreign oil for 55.5 percent of their needs last week, and there are no signs that the upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian Gulf war, the United States obtained approximately 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970's, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Anybody else interested in restoring domestic production of oil—by U.S. producers using American workers? Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity sure to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the United States—now 7,984,000 barrels a day.

RECOGNITION OF HOME EDUCATION IN MISSOURI

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate home schoolers in Missouri who are celebrating Missouri Home Education Week, May 4-10, 1997. As a parent and former teacher, I understand the vital importance of sound education in a child's development. The opportunities for students who achieve educational excellence are virtually limitless.

As a U.S. Senator I fully recognize that the character and productivity of our Nation are directly linked to the quality of education provided to America's youth. Throughout my career in

public service, I have been pleased to support the efforts of home schoolers to provide quality education.

Home educators in Missouri are making an extra effort to give their children the best chance for success in an ever-changing society. They recognize the importance of family and judge home schooling to be the educational setting that is most appropriate. By personally guiding the scholastic endeavors of their children, home educators ensure that all facets of a child's development are considered when preparing them to become active, productive, and responsible citizens.

In Missouri, home education has enjoyed considerable success in recent years because of the tremendous support received from citizens all across the State who realize the significance of family participation in the educational process. Furthermore, Missouri home schoolers are establishing one-on-one relationships with adult role models and mentors who enrich home education learning by providing hands-on business experience. This exposure to the marketplace allows home schoolers the opportunity to interact with business, community, and civic organizations.

I commend the achievement realized by home schools in the State of Missouri and applaud your noble work on this special observance of Home Education Week in Missouri, May 4-10, 1997.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-1619. A communication from the Commissioner of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report for fiscal year 1994; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1620. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Abatement Verification" (RIN1218-AB40) received on March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1621. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to alternative tax proposals; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1622. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on the Orphan Products Board for calendar years 1993 through 1995; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1623. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Individual Market Health Insurance Reform" (RIN0938-AH75) received on April 10, 1997; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1624. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant